

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 9, 2021

Mr. Ian G. Brownlee
Acting Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Consular Affairs
U.S. Department of State
600 19th St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Brownlee,

We write to you today regarding a troubling situation at the New York City Passport Office and we are requesting your direct intervention to protect our constituents from an unsavory, third-party business practice.

During some routine casework, a congressional liaison at the New York City Passport Office informed a member of Rep. Rice's staff that private passport courier services were being allowed to reserve in-person appointments open to the public in large blocs. These couriers are then selling access to these appointments to desperate people who need immediate services to renew passports. We are requesting that the Bureau of Consular Affairs take immediate action to prevent these private couriers from reserving appointments.

We understand that Passport Agencies across the US have been inundated with applications and requests for same-day, in-person appointments. Because these agencies are not working at full strength due to the pandemic, in-person appointments for passport renewal or first-time passport applications are increasingly difficult to come by. The Bureau of Consular Affairs should do whatever it can to protect the integrity of this first-come, first-serve appointment process. Making these appointments available to the public only and designating them as non-transferrable would be a good first step in addressing this issue.

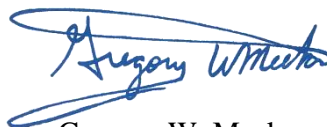
Once again, we would like to urge your direct intervention to protect our constituents from these unscrupulous business practices and make these appointments non-transferrable and available to the public only. If we can be of assistance going forward, please contact Tom Curry in Rep. Rice's District Office at (202) 505-0424 or tom.curry@mail.house.gov.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress (NY-04)



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress (NY-05)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Zeldin'.

Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress (NY-01)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas R. Suozzi'.

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress (NY-03)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Garbarino'.

Andrew Garbarino
Member of Congress (NY-02)